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CALL FOR IMPROVEMENT IN DOCTOR TRAINING

M. Kruglova,
Chief, Sec for Improvement of Doctors, GUMUZ
Ministry of Public Health USSR

The USSR has 11 institutions and nine special courses for improving the qualification of doctors. A total of 15,000 doctors annually avail themselves of this service. Basically these improvement courses operate on the principle that doctors take specific types of courses to permit them to practice in their chosen fields. Courses have been improved and standards of instruction have risen, but there are shortcomings in organization and in assignment of doctors to various specialized courses.

Many doctors have taken the same course several times and in many classes doctors just starting practice are studying with those who have already practiced for many years in their particular fields. For example, the class held at the Chair of Community Hygiene, Leningrad GIDUV, includes doctors who have practiced for 24 years in the field of community hygiene, as well as those who have practiced only 6 months. The experience of students attending the course in the Chair of General Hygiene ranges from 2 months to 12 years.

Organization of program schedules seems lacking and frequently students are uninformed of classes or are unable to obtain assignments to specialties which will serve them best in their fields. Thus we have a situation where epidemiologists, community hygienists, and nutrition specialists all take the same course given by the Chair for Organization of Public Health Measures, "enriched GIDUV".

Much of this inefficiency is due to laxity of those planning the courses. Basically the program is sound.

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Because of these conditions, the Main Administration for Medical Teaching Institutions, Ministry of Public Health USSR, and the Central Institute for the Improvement of Doctors drew up curricula to be followed by institutions. These very good programs require proper staffs, and frequently unqualified doctors have been assigned to teaching specialties out of their fields. At Odessa Institute for Improvement of Doctors, 1948 graduates of medical schools are assigned to lecture to experienced doctors on problems of obstetrics, gynecology and physiotherapy.

Under present conditions, doctors who have had upwards of 20 years experience are sent to specialization schools while those who have relatively no experience attend improvement courses. In September 1948, some 59 doctors arrived at the Leningrad GIDUV and only 26 were properly assigned.

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